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MAYOR IZLAR'S FIRST MESSAGE.

To the Honorable City Council, of
Ocala, Florida.

Gentlemen: Upon assuming the office of mayor of the city, it is proper, and I believe the custom, that I lay before you the line of public policy which I shall pursue, as well as suggest for your consideration any matters which I deem for the interest of the city—for the advancement of its material and moral progress and prosperity—which I need hardly assure you I have very much at heart.

As you know, I am comparatively a stranger in your midst, having been among you not quite four years, and never doubting that the mayor's office would be tendered and conferred upon me, I devoted my time almost exclusively to my profession in my effort to build up a business in about the only field I have been trained to labor, and consequently have not endeavored to conform myself to the management, or conducting of the municipal affairs of our city. Still, I have eyes, and I see. Ears, and I hear, and naturally I see and hear a great many things which have not been done, and which in my humble judgment would add much to the advancement and prosperity of our city, as well as add to its attractiveness and desirability as a place for a home and for the investment of capital and opening up of manufacturing and other industrial enterprises.

Powers and Duty of the Mayor.

Since my election to the mayoralty I have endeavored to inform myself somewhat as to the powers and duties of the office, and find that my powers are executive, judicial and advisory. In my executive capacity it is expected of me to enforce such laws and ordinances as I may find to now obtain, or may hereafter be enacted, for the government of the city. It is scarcely necessary for me to say, gentlemen, that having in my oath of qualification solemnly promised to do that to the best of my ability, that I shall faithfully observe my oath. The statue of justice is represented as blindfolded, holding the scales in trembling hand. This does not mean that justice is blind to justice, but blind to everything but justice in the given case, and in attempting to execute the laws and ordinances of the city I shall endeavor to see nothing but the right in every instance, and will follow this as I see it, and understand it, to the letter.

But gentlemen, in exercising my executive functions, your co-operation is, in many instances, essential. It is well nigh impossible for me to enforce some of the laws and ordinances now in force in the city unless you come to my assistance by supplying the necessary means—financial, tools, implements and laborers—with which the work required to be accomplished alone can be done. To say by ordinance that this and that shall be done, and then say that it is the duty of the mayor to execute that ordinance and yet make no provision for the means by which it is to be carried into effect, is indeed worse than requiring the making of "bricks without straw." I therefore solicit, and hope to receive the sincere and united co-operation of the city council in my efforts to execute the laws and ordinances which now are in force, as well as providing for successfully carrying out of certain measures herein after suggested.

In so far as my duties in the judicial department are concerned, I think I shall be able to "tread the winepress alone," and will strive to so conduct it that evil doers will "cease to do evil and learn to do well," and the law-abiding rest more securely under the shield of the law. Still, in this department too, justice shall be meted out with a firm but impartial hand—"hewing to the line, let the chips fall where they may." Endeavoring to be just, fair and impar-

tial in all cases. The law is for all alike, and all must obey it, or else they shoulder the responsibility voluntarily, and should therefore accept the consequences which legitimately follow with the best grace possible. In such cases if anathemas are to be pronounced, let them pile them upon their own heads and not upon me.

In my advisory capacity there are a number of matters to which I wish to call the attention of your honorable body. In my opinion some of them at least, most deeply concern the future growth, progress and prosperity of our city.

Ocala's Excellent Natural Advantages.

Ocala geographically, is envied with natural advantages which if utilized, will place her on the forefront of most, if not all of the interior cities of Florida. Situated near the center of the state and peninsula, upon an elevation above the sea level as great as any and greater than most of the inland towns of the state, with large and prosperous phosphate, turpentine and lumber industries, with fertile soil and a climate which enables our farmers to produce successfully many valuable agricultural products, an endless variety of choice vegetables and citrus fruits, we must upon reflection acknowledge that Nature has dealt with an exceedingly generous hand towards this locality. In addition to all of this, we have two of the most beautiful and inviting bodies of water to be found anywhere in all the world—Lake Weir and Silver Springs—almost at our doors. The latter calls loudly to us to utilize the means which it offers to build up the commercial interests of the city and community.

The Question of Transportation.

This brings me to the question of transportation. It is unnecessary that I enlarge upon it. The city and community are well acquainted with the situation—with the oppressive and discriminating freight rates and miserable service we are now having with the railroads, which as matters stand are our only dependence. I am thoroughly convinced that the needed relief is within our grasp, if we but have the will to reach out and take hold of it. By a determined and united effort a company can be organized which can acquire and run a line of river steamers from Silver Springs out into the sea if necessary, and the same company can build a trolley line to Ocala from the Springs, and continue it on to Lake Weir if desired. I am satisfied that this scheme is practicable and with proper, well directed effort capitalists can be found who will readily undertake it, for the simple reason that it will pay. The U. S. government can, and doubtless will, do its part by appropriating funds to clean out and do whatever dredging may be needed in Ocklawaha and Silver Springs run. In my opinion once such an enterprise becomes an established fact, the transportation question will be solved—and solved in such a way as to rebound to the lasting building up and prosperity of Ocala and Marion county as well as other neighboring territory. But to accomplish it, it will require the hearty, united and persistent effort of our citizens and the investment of some of their money—but it will be a paying investment in many ways. From its natural location, our city will then become a distributing point for a large territory, and wholesale businesses will be built up and increased, population will come in, money put into manufacturing enterprises and the city will grow in extent and wealth and all properties greatly increase in value.

But we must be up and doing with united and common purpose, and no longer each one struggle for himself and in the struggle hope for "the survival of the fittest," but labor to the end that all may be "blessed to survive."

I do not know that this matter comes within the province of the city council, but I earnestly suggest that any aid and encouragement that your body can give, as well as that you as individuals can do, will engage

your earnest and strenuous attention.
Drainage and Sewerage.

Another subject which has been, and is now, engaging the attention of our citizens, is the question of drainage, or sewerage. This is of vital importance and cannot receive too careful and thorough consideration at your hands. I am informed that some experiments and investigations have been and are still going on for the information of your body, and I earnestly suggest that the matter be thoroughly, systematically and scientifically pursued without abatement until some practical and most efficient system be determined upon and put into operation. I am informed that underneath the city, at what depth I do not know, there is a running stream of water of considerable volume and force. If this be true, then it seems to me that by a series of wells sunk until this stream is reached, and sewer pipes run as may be needed into these wells, that a safe, sanitary and efficient system of drainage is kindly provided for us by nature. Of course if this stream exists, some means should be adopted to ascertain where it empties its waters, as it might neither be wise, kind or safe to throw the sewerage of the city into it if by so doing it would greatly injure others, else the last state be worse than the first.

If it be found that no such stream exists, or if existing it cannot be safely utilized, then some other system should be devised that will prove satisfactory and safe. The system—if such it may be called—now in use in the city, should be carefully and scientifically examined into and tested in order to determine to what extent, if any, the drinking water of the city is contaminated thereby. Surely science which has accomplished so much in our day, is equal to the solution of so simple a problem as this appears to be, the uninhabited, to be. The tests made in the city some months ago, to my mind are not only superficial and unsatisfactory, but were not, even of the kind, sufficiently extended. Let the tests be continued, always keeping in mind the facts that the earth is the best purifier known, and that in all cases water runs down hill and will seek its level.

Street and Lot Improvement.

In calling your attention to this subject, I do not by any means intend that other sanitary measures should be overlooked. By all means let careful attention be given to keeping the city clean. Garbage, filth, trash and debris of all kinds should be removed from all parts of the city. From the streets, from all premises, from all vacant lots. Let the sanitary commission see to it that this is promptly done, and if neglected, that all delinquents be reported in order that proper measures may be taken to enforce the ordinance in that regard. Too much importance cannot be given to keeping the city clean, neat and attractive, both from a sanitary viewpoint, as well as pride in ourselves, and the pleasure, satisfaction and delight of the strangers within our gates. To this end I earnestly suggest that every possible effort be made to build and keep in good repair our streets and sidewalks. Nothing adds more to the beauty and attractiveness of any city than good, well kept streets and sidewalks. It is strong evidence of the thrift as well as the pride of the citizens in their city, and to strangers coming amongst us it is a strong incentive to investment in the homes and industrial enterprises of various kinds.

I therefore recommend, that under the direction of a practical street commissioner this work be undertaken and pursued in a regular systematic way. Do not try to work in a slipshod way all over the city at once, and have a little done here and a little there which gives the streets the appearance of a patch-work quilt, but begin at the public square, and have the streets around it either paved with some substantial material, and the sidewalks all made with some good, smooth, durable stuff, and then from the square take up the streets systematically and have the sidewalks regularly and evenly laid off and covered with some material that will make them firm—and do the streets likewise. Of course all of this cannot be done in a day, month or year, but systematic work once inaugurated will be taken up by your successors, and after awhile we will have a city the streets of which will be "a thing of beauty and a joy forever." The work once well done will be lasting and will not be forever needing the "quilt-work patching." In the end it will be economy and a good investment for the public funds.

While on the subject of street improvements, I suggest and recommend that an additional policeman be added to the day force. Obtain, if possible, an active, energetic man of good judgment and a fair practical knowledge of surface draining and road building, and while he should be vested with full police powers, let his chief work be to take charge of all street laborers—whether employed or serving out sentence of the city court—and direct and supervise the street work, whether the same be building or repairing. This work, as

I have already said, to be begun and continued in a regular systematic way, as laid out and ordered by the street commissioner. The scavenger wagons and carts should be kept constantly at work either carting away the filth and debris from the streets, or when that is done, then to be used in hauling material for the building and repairing of the streets and sidewalks of the city. I feel sure that if this is done and the work well looked after by those in charge of the several departments, we will soon see a vast improvement in the condition of our streets and they will cease to be grazing grounds for cattle and hogs. Our yards and flower gardens will no longer be depredated upon by these trespassing beasts.

How the City Can Be Kept Clean and Made Beautiful.

The mayor is expected to see that the laws and ordinances of the city are enforced, and he will do his best, but to succeed he must be supplied with the necessary force and implements to carry on the work, and it is for you gentlemen, to hold up his hands. You alone can supply these, and he hopes and expects to receive your co-operation.

On this same subject I further suggest and recommend, that when the summer is well on and the weeds and grass have encumbered our streets, sidewalks and vacant lots, that the city provide itself with a good one-horse mowing machine and mow the weeds and grass at least twice during the season. I say one-horse mowing machine advisedly, because a good, mule will be sufficient to do the work and will be able to get at the weeds in nooks and corners where the two-horse machine could not be very well worked. I am aware that there is an ordinance that requires the property owners to clear the sidewalks and lots of their respective premises, but it also provides that if they do not do so, the city will do it at their expense. Now, where labor is scarce, and those who can use the grass few, is it not possible for owners to have the work done, and even those who can secure the labor find the work poorly done. If the owners must pay for it, in any event, why not the city do it for them and collect the pay? It will be economy for them in the end, for the city with a mower will do more cutting in one day than the best grass blade cutter can do in a week, and in addition to that it will soon all be done and the city will present an appearance everywhere at once, that will be attractive and pleasing to the eye and a delight to pedestrians. If this be done, you will be surprised that it was not done long before. Let not a vacant lot, street or sidewalk where weeds grow escape, and if necessary levy the expenses on the owner. You have no idea how quickly it can be done with a good mule and machine with a competent and industrious driver, nor what a difference it will make in the appearance of our city. But some will say that when the weeds are cut they must also be carted away. I say it is not at all necessary, and I speak from experience. If the work is done before the weeds are too rank and large, the sun in a few days will reduce them to powder sticks, and without the least harm resulting from it. It was done for years in the town of Blackville, S. C., where I came from, and the mortality report of that little town was less per thousand, than any place in the state. Three years my family lived on Carolina Heights at the head of Ocklawaha avenue, and each year I had the weeds mowed down all around my premises twice a year, and we had no fever that could possibly have resulted from that, on the place. You know our good doctors tell us that the theory of inhaling or drinking in malaria is now exploded—it is now administered to us hyperdermically by the pestiferous mosquitoes. We need not produce mosquitoes. The ova may be deposited in water—not in dew or rain drops—and the hatching and developing must go on in water until the little fellows get wings. Then they crawl out and dry and are ready for business. So the only reason why the weeds should be carted away is for appearance sake, and unless they are very rank and large they soon disappear, at least to such an extent that they are scarcely noticed.

The suggested improvements to the streets and general cleaning up of the city are all the more necessary now, that we have our handsome and imposing court house nearing completion and anticipate at an early day the erection of a still more imposing building by the United States government. These buildings will be the pride of the city and county, and will look like a pearl set in a copper ring, unless we do our part in making the contrast appear less conspicuous.

We would be unworthy of ourselves, and injure the fair name of our city if we permit the city to suffer by comparison with the public buildings of which we do, and well may, proudly boast.

Some time ago I noticed in the press that an ordinance renaming the streets and providing for posting the names of the same, and for renumbering the houses was on its passage

before the council. I do not remember to have seen whether the ordinance became a law or not. I presume from the fact that I have seen no work being done to carry the provisions of the ordinance into effect, that it must have failed in its passage. If so I recommend that it be taken up and passed. I think it a good measure and would prove beneficial to the city in several respects which will readily suggest themselves to the members of the city council, and the expense of carrying out the provisions will be inconsiderable.

Financial Affairs.

We approach a subject now, gentlemen, of the deepest interest to every citizen of the city, and especially of the taxpayers.

Since notified, officially, of my election to the office of mayor, I have been engaged whenever opportunity presented itself, in making investigations and getting up data from which I hoped to be able to present you a clear, plain and easily understood statement of the receipts and expenditures of the various departments of the municipal government—showing the amount of money received into the treasury, and from what source received—the amount paid out in each department and for what purpose. I have tried to find out what property is owned by the city and its estimated value. To ascertain whether the electric plant is, or is not, paying expenses, producing a profit, or a loss to the city. To ascertain what water privileges the city is entitled to under its water contract with the Water Works people and see if the people are getting all that is coming to them under that contract and if not, why not. But while the courteous clerk of council has made up for me a summary statement from the books and explained all matters as far as he could do so, still, I am sorry to say that with all of this, and all oral explanations that were kindly given me by all upon whom I called, my investigations have not supplied me with the data which

enables me to make up a statement which I could lay before you as even approaching an absolutely correct showing of the financial affairs of the city. It will neither be safe as a basis of action, or fair for me to make statements and base recommendations upon these most important questions until I am prepared to do so with at least a high degree of certainty as to their correctness and reliability. I shall continue my investigations with the hope that at an early date I may be enabled to submit a satisfactory report of these matters with such recommendations as I may deem advisable, to your honorable body. In the meantime I would suggest that city council, by committee or otherwise, make investigations along these lines, as too much consideration cannot be given to the financial affairs of the city in order that the taxpayers may be protected, and that they get value received for the money they pay into the city treasury. I think we should hear less complaint of high city taxation if our citizens are made to see that they get full value and the best results possible for the taxes they pay. They are entitled to that, and it should be our aim to fulfil their expectations of us as public servants.

I may add in passing that it does appear that the police department has no only paid expenses, but has a surplus of \$1765.00 to its credit at the end of December, 1906.

A Word About Our Water Contract.

In such investigations as I have been able to make into the financial affairs I was surprised to find that the city paid out last year, and for some years past, over \$1,000 for water privileges. It seems to me that this sum is largely in excess of the real value of the water used by the city even taking the rates charged to individuals as a basis. Naturally I was led to examine the contract ordinance of the city with the Water Works Co., and while not now intending to an-

(Continued on page twelve.)

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